

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 08447 01 OF 02 102007Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-08 FRB-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-07 TRSE-00
LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGRE-00 L-03 /071 W
-----060431 102200Z /73

R 101002Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8426
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
USMISSION GENEVA

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USEEC ALSO FOR EMBASSY, USMTN ALSO FOR USMISSION

PASS AGRICULTURE FOR HATHAWAY, HUGHES AND LANKFORD/FAS

E.O. 11652:N/A
TAGS: EAGR/FR
SUBJECT: FRENCH ACTION TOWARDS PROTEIN INDEPENDENCE

REF: A. FR-7099; B. TOFAS 430; C. AIRCOMM NOV. 25, 1977;
D. STATE 5173 DATED FEB. 16, 1978.#

1. SUMMARY:

GOF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HAS ANNOUNCED ITS INTENTION TO
REDUCE FRENCH DEPENDENCE ON PROTEIN IMPORTS. FOR THE
FIRST TIME, ACTIONS PROPOSED INCLUDE AN EFFORT TO BRING
SOYBEANS AND SIMILAR PRODUCTS UNDER EC REGULATIONS
SIMILAR TO OTHER CAP REGULATIONS. OTHER PROPOSALS
INCLUDE SUPPORT FOR DOMESTIC VEGETABLE PROTEIN AND
OTHER SUPPORT MEASURES PREVIOUSLY REPORTED (REFTELS).
END SUMMARY.

2. THE FRENCH COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON FEB. 22

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PAGE 02 PARIS 08447 01 OF 02 102007Z

ADOPTED A NEW POLICY OF PROTEIN INDEPENDENCE. AG
MINISTER MEHAIGNERIE ANNOUNCED COUNCIL'S DECISION
FIXING FRANCE'S NEW GOAL TO CUT DEPENDENCE ON IMPORTED
PROTEINS FROM 80 PERCENT CURRENTLY TO 65 PERCENT BY
1982, DESPITE AN EXPECTED RISE IN CONSUMPTION OF AROUND
120,000 MT PER YEAR SOYBEAN MEAL EQUIVALENT (SME).
COUNCIL'S DECISION MOVES FORWARD EXPECTED GOF ACTION

ON PROTEIN INDEPENDENCE BY SEVERAL WEEKS. (SUPERFORMA MEETING OF FEB. 8 - REF. D - HAD SUPPOSEDLY FIXED MID-APRIL AS NEXT OCCASION FOR HIGH LEVEL CONSIDERATION OF GOF POLICY IN THIS AREA). MAIN DECISIONS WERE THE FOLLOWING:

3. ACTIONS AT THE EC LEVEL.

GOF WILL PUT PRESSURE ON THE EC TO HAVE IT REDUCE PROTEIN IMPORTS TO THE WHOLE COMMUNITY THROUGH FOLLOWING MEASURES:

(A) SYSTEM OF FLOOR PRICES AND IMPORT VARIABLE LEVIES FOR IMPORTED PROTEINS. (B) EC REGULATIONS GOVERNING VEGETABLE PROTEIN PRODUCTION SHOULD BE DRAWN UP WITH FINANCIAL AID TO BOOST PRODUCTION OF SOYBEAN, OILSEED, PEAS AND HORSEBEANS. (C) REDUCTION OF CASSAVA (MANIOC) IMPORTS, WHICH FORMS AN IMPORTANT COMPLEMENT TO EC PROTEIN PURCHASES FROM THIRD COUNTRIES. (D) IN THE ABSENCE OF THE ABOVE POLICIES THE EC SHOULD ESTABLISH COMMUNITY WIDE SUBSIDIES TO INDUSTRIES PRODUCING PROTEINS AND PROTEINS SUBSTITUTES. NO REFERENCE WAS MADE TO GATT OBLIGATIONS OR OBLIGATIONS TO AFRICAN SUPPLIERS UNDER THE LOME CONVENTION.

4. ACTION TAKEN IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE VIITH PLAN, PRIORITY ACTION PROGRAM (P.A.P) (REF. A).

(A) GENETIC RESEARCH ON PROTEIN PEA PRODUCTION WILL RECEIVE AIDS TOTALING 5 MILLION FF BETWEEN 1978 AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 PARIS 08447 01 OF 02 102007Z

NOTE BY OC/T: # REFTEL NOT IDENTIFIED.

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PAGE 01 PARIS 08447 02 OF 02 102131Z
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1982. (B) 8 MILLION FF ARE TO BE SPENT IN 1981 AND
1982 TO EXPERIMENT WITH PRODUCTION OF HIGH PROTEIN
PLANTS. (C) 25,000 HECTARES OF PROTEIN RICH PLANTS
SHOULD BE PUT INTO CULTIVATION BY 1982 WITH ECONOMIC
ASSISTANCE FROM THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT.

5. SUPPORT ACTIONS.

(A) ACTIONS AIMING AT DIVERSIFYING FRANCE'S FOREIGN
PROTEIN SUPPLIERS MORE TOWARDS BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES
WILL BE INTENSIFIED.
(B) INCREASED QUALITY CONTROLS ON IMPORTED SOYMEALS.

6. COMMENTS: OFFICIALLY, POLICY QUOTED ABOVE HAS
THE VALUE OF GOVERNMENTAL DECISION SINCE IT RESULTED
FROM A MEETING OF PRIME MINISTER'S CABINET. HOWEVER,
IN THE CURRENT FRENCH POLITICAL CONTEXT (JUST AHEAD
OF LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS) IT SHOULD RATHER BE VIEWED
AS A "DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLE" WHICH COULD BE IMPLE-
MENTED IF SUCH IS GOF'S REAL POLITICAL WILL AFTER
MID-MARCH ELECTIONS. THIS REMAINS TO BE SEEN, BUT
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PAGE 02 PARIS 08447 02 OF 02 102131Z

THE THREAT TO US INTERESTS IS REAL. IF MEASURES
ACTIVELY PURSUED AFTER ELECTIONS, FORMAL REPRESENTA-
TIONS SHOULD BE MADE BOTH TO GOF AND EC TO PROTECT
US SOYBEAN MARKET IN EUROPE.

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